New England Deaconess Hospital

pulse

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Deaconess dedicates new seven-bed hemodialysis unit

Official ribbon-cutting ceremonies and an open house on December 13 marked the opening of a new 7-bed hemodialysis unit on Deaconess 2. Dedication of this facility represents another in a series of major renovation projects completed in the Deaconess building.

The new dialysis unit was designed by the combined effort of the hospital's maintenance and engineering department under the direction of Neil Keating, and Nursing Service headed by Ellen Howland. Actual construction work was split about evenly between maintenance and engineering and outside contractors.

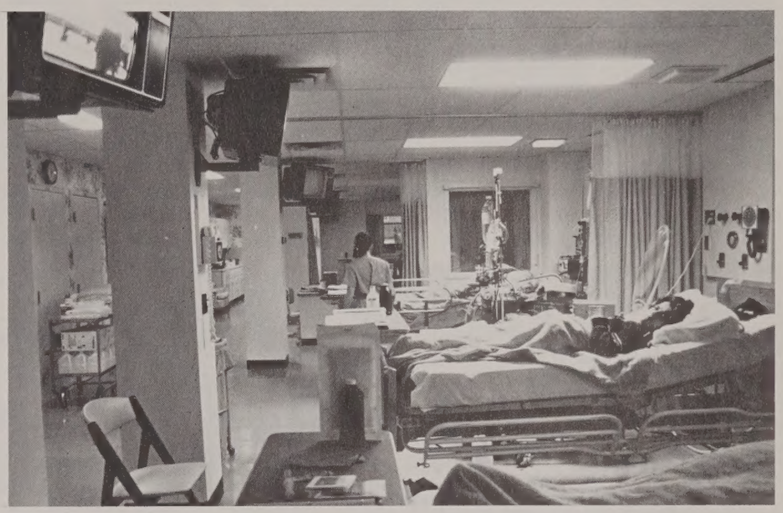
Former dialysis unit patient Mark Tucker, a NEDH hemotology technologist, and Robin deStefano, histology technologist, cut the ribbon at dedication ceremonies for the unit.

Anyone familiar with the cramped four-bed dialysis unit on Palmer 2 will instantly appreciate the new quarters. Five regular dialysis beds flanked by two private rooms are now spaciously set in an area brightened by light pastel floral wall prints and matching cabinets. An airy feeling of newness is bound to lift the spirits of patients and dialysis personnel alike.

In recognition that the Deaconess dialysis unit is a patient centered renal unit, two Deaconess employees, Mark Tucker, a former dialysis patient and Robin deStefano, the wife of a former patient, officiated at the ribbon cutting ceremony.

According to Ann Hurley, nursing care coordinator of hemodialysis, the Deaconess unit is intended for acute care patients. Generally these patients are either waiting for a functioning kidney transplant or they are temporarily receiving hospital-based dialysis until arrangements can be made for home dialysis or transfer to a longer term chronic care kidney center.

The unit's seven-bed capacity will gradually permit planned dialysis treatments to increase by 50% from 44 in the old unit to a new maximum of 66 per week. Current plans call for 11 treatment shifts to be spread out over six days and five evenings. Each shift will require four RN's on duty at all times.



In addition to the more obvious improvements in aesthetics and operating capacity, the new unit brings another valuable feature previously missing. The two private treatment rooms now allow patients to be dialyzed apart from other patients. This is especially important for patients with communicable diseases like hepatitis or for those, who for other reasons, need to be isolated.

Diabetic blindness studied in Beetham Eye Unit

Diabetic retinopathy has become a leading cause of blindness and visual disability in the United States over the past few decades. Ten million diabetics are prime targets for blinding disorders, with 300,000 of them presently at risk of becoming completely blind.

A few diabetics never show any sign of diabetic retinopathy, and many undergo the earlier changes without further damage. However, in all too many diabetics the disease progresses until massive bleeding, scarring and retinal detachment destroys the ability of the eye to function.

The Beetham Eye Unit of the Joslin Clinic and Joslin Diabetes Foundation has been active in the study and treatment of diabetic retinopathy involving many patients from the New England Deaconess Hospital. Since 1971, the Eye Unit has been a center for the Diabetic Retinopathy Study (DRS) which has successfully demonstated the beneficial effect of photocoagulation (laser treatment) on patients with advanced diabetic retinopathy.

Presently research into this ocular disease is being continued through the Early Treatment of Diabetic Retinopathy Study (ETDRS). The Beetham Eye Unit is one of 19 participating clinics throughout the United States. The 7 year study will involve approximately 4,000 diabetics, about 200 from each center.

Of the many parts of the eye which may be affected by diabetes, the retinal changes lead to the most severe and profound loss of vision. The vessels in the retina (a lining along the back of the eye which resembles the film in a camera) lose their integrity, thus causing small leaks and poor circulation. These complications result in the growth of new blood vessels which may lead to blindness.

The diabetic patient is 25 times more prone to legal blindness and visual handicaps than the rest of the population. The juvenile onset diabetic of 15 years duration has a 63% chance of having diabetic retinopathy, an 18% chance of developing proliferating diabetic retinopathy and a 2% chance of becoming totally blind. Proliferating diabetic retinopathy is much less common among adult onset diabetics, who more often have a visual handicap related to the loss of central vision.

Unfortunately the retina cannot be replaced or transplanted if damaged. The two major methods used in treating diabetic retinopathy are photocoagulation and vitrectomy. The pan-retinal photocoagulation technique, currently used in all of the studies and by many opthalmologists throughout the world, was pioneered at the Eye Unit by Drs. William Beetham and Lloyd Aiello, ophthalmologists at

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Cancer program receives high rating

The Deaconess cancer program has been accredited for an additional three years by the American College of Surgeons Commission on Cancer, and upgraded from a Category II to a Category I rating. The Deaconess is one of few hospitals in Massachusetts to be given such a rating.

"Since the inspection resulting in Category II status, the hospital's cancer program has been greatly expanded and enhanced by the appointment of Dr. Jacob Lokich as section chief of oncology and by the establishment of a cancer administration and protocol office," said Assistant Director Robert Pence, "Also integral to the program is our computerized tumor registry, one of the earliest approved by the American College of Surgeons in the United States. Many institutions around the country have contacted us for information on how our registry is set up."

The commission's overall review of the Deaconess program was termed "excellent", taking into consideration educational multidisciplinary exchange on cancer patient management, quality control, monitoring treatment and long term follow up.

In addition, Dr. Lokich has been named associate liaison fellow of the commission. He joins Mr. Pence (associate liaision fellow) and Dr. William V. McDermott, Jr., (liaison fellow) in representing the Deaconess on the commission. Further advancing the hospital's cancer program, the Cancer Research Institute is one of fourteen institutes in the United States to be a member of the International Union Against Cancer.

A special christmas gift of love

Each year the Christmas season brings out the best in people and many stories abound at this time of year with the spirit of giving and goodwill toward others. This Christmas one such story came to light at the Deaconess with the arrival of 15-year-old Labrini Bitsa from Athens, Greece for a kidney transplant.

At age 2½, Labrini came down with measles and glomerulo nephritis. Together these diseases weakened her kidneys. During the years that followed Labrini's condition gradually worsened. She suffered increasingly severe bouts of hypertension, high blood pressure and swollen eyes. Eight months ago, she was forced to begin dialysis treatments in Greece and her physicians determined that Labrini badly needed a kidney transplant.

Her mother, Anastasia, 46, a widowed owner of a small cafe in Athens, was willing to give one of her kidneys.

To raise funds for the costly operation, Labrini's aunt placed ads in Athens newspapers asking for contributions. Word spread and the response was overwhelming. Greek citizens and businesses donated $20,000. Thousands of United States servicemen at Air Force bases around Europe came forth with another $33,000 swelling the total to over $50,000.

At the same time, by coincidence, Dr. Fredricka Vlachokosta, an endocrinologist at Joslin Clinic, was vacationing in Greece at her family's home. Later, the Bitsas spoke with her about Labrini's condition and she agreed to help.

Arriving back at the Deaconess, Dr. Vlachokosta interceded on Labrini's behalf and received assurances from a team of transplant surgeons that they would perform the operation free of charge.

Just before Christmas, Labrini, her mother, an aunt and an uncle came to the Deaconess. While she waited for the transplant, Labrini continued dialysis treatments and received many cards and letters of encouragement.

Perhaps the best encouragement came with a personal visit from Richard and Danny Gauthier of Lincoln, Rhode Island. Almost a year ago Danny, now 11, successfully received a kidney transplant from his father, Richard, at the Deaconess.

With Dr. Vlachokosta serving as translator, the Gauthiers reassured Labrini and her mother by telling of their own experiences, thereby bridging a gap of fear which a language barrier had worsened.

Danny told Labrini, "don't worry, you go into the operating room and the next thing you know you're waking up in the recovery room without feeling a thing."

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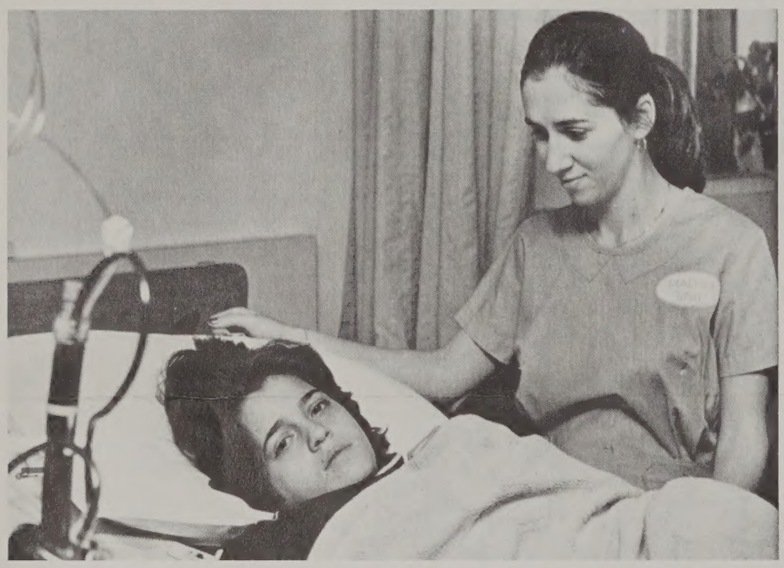


Under the watchful eye of renal nurse Chrystalla Martin, Lambrini Bitsa undergoes dialysis prior to her operation.

Deaconess News in Brief

Nightworkers were treated to a **"Thanksmas"** holiday meal from 11:30 p.m., December 11, until 2 a.m. the following day by members of the dietary department. As over 200 employees enjoyed the meal, Director of Dietetics Joyce Tower and Administrators Richard E. Lee, Ellen Howland and Peter Campisano circulated the room to express their appreciation to the employees for their year-round service to the hospital. (see opposite page).

Dr. F. Henry Ellis, Jr., chairman of the department of thoracic and cardiovascular surgery, recently presented the Honoured Guest Lecture on "The Education of a Thoracic Surgeon" at the annual meeting of the Society of Thoracic and Cardio-vascular Surgeons of Great Britain and Ireland. At the meeting, held in Coventry, England, Dr. Ellis was made an honorary member of the society. Dr. Ellis has received a two-year appointment to the Advisory Council for Thoracic Surgery of the American College of Surgeons; and a one-year appointment as the American Medical Association representative to the Residency Review Committee for Thoracic Surgery.

Dr. Harold D. Levine, NEDH cardiologist, received the Distinguished Service Award from the American Heart Association (Massachusetts affiliate) last month at ceremonies held in Boston. Following the presentation, Dr. Levine recounted the many years he has worked with the association. He also discussed the ongoing problems facing cardiac patients and the association's response to these issues.

Dr. Robert E. Wise, NEDH radiology staff and chief executive officer of the Lahey Clinic, received the Gold Medal of the Radiological Society of North America on November 26. The medal is the organization's highest honor, awarded to those who "have rendered unusual service to the science of radiology." Earlier this year Dr. Wise was given the American Radiology's Gold Medal, making him the third person in the history of the two societies to receive both medals in the same year.

Eight members of the **Deaconess Nutrition Support Service** presented a seminar on the "Nutrition Support of the Hospitalized Patient", on November 26 and 27 in Pittsburgh, PA. The members were: Drs. George Blackburn, Bruce Bistrian, Albert Bothe and Peter Benotti; Joanne Wade, dietitian; Sue DiPalma, hyperalimentation nurse; Richard Griffin, pharmacist; and Meg Lahey, coordinator.

Lynne Ometer, assistant director of patient nutritional care, lectured on the audit process and assisted in conducting an audit workshop for a dietitians' seminar sponsored by the Seiler's Corporation in November. Ms. Ometer published an article on "An Intra-departmental Audit to Measure the Quality of Nutritional Care" in the Journal of the American Dietetic Association (November issue).

Renal Dietitian Specialist **Susan Levine** recently addressed the National Kidney Foundation on the "Use of a Decision Tree for Nutritional Assessment in Chronic Renal Failure."

Diabetic *(continued from page 1)*

NEDH and Joslin. In photocoagulation, powerful light rays are directed through the eye and focused on the retina. The light is absorbed and converted to heat which cauterizes the abnormal blood vessels and reduces the stimulus for new vessel formation.

In the vitrectomy operation, the blood hemorrhage is taken out and replaced by a clear liquid, while the scar tissue which accompanies abnormal blood vessels is removed or cut to alleviate its pull on the retina, thus preventing retinal detachment.

The most important finding of the DRS is that photocoagulation can reduce the risk of severe visual loss in people with advanced diabetic retinopathy. However, the DRS did not indicate a clear choice between prompt photocoagulation or deferred treatment in the earlier stages of the disease's progress. The objective of the ETDRS is to find out if photocoagulation early in the development of the disease may slow or even prevent its worsening.

Dr. Lawrence I. Rand, an opthalmologist at NEDH and Joslin Clinic, was instrumental in developing the design and protocol of ETDRS, and he now serves as chairman of the Study Monitoring Groups, coordinating the day-to-day activities of the centers. Dr. Aiello is the ETDRS national chairman, while Josephine Falco, research coordinator at Joslin, is an ETDRS clinic coordinator. She is the liaison between the ETDRS patients, physicians and four governing centers.

Participation in the study is voluntary and the ETDRS physicians do not replace the patient's personal physician. Treatment for the patients will begin this month after their eligibility has been documented during several extensive examinations. The patients are scheduled to return for examinations every 4 months for 5 to 7 years.

All patients will have the treatment of one eye assigned to photocoagulation. The eye to be treated and method to be used will be selected randomly. In addition, each patient will be randomly assigned to take either two tablets of aspirin or two tablets of placebo (containing no active ingredients) each day. Some researchers suggest that taking aspirin when diabetic retinopathy is mild may slow or prevent its progression. Therefore, the ETDRS is also designed to evaluate aspirin's effects.

All medical information on the patients will be processed at the Center for Disease Control in Atlanta, Georgia. The data will be stored and analyzed through the coordinating center at the University of Maryland. A panel of experts will periodically examine the data and, if significant results are achieved, then the ETDRS physicians will be notified.

"The photocoagulation treatment in this society is not experimental," said Dr Aiello, "The patient will be getting the best treatment possible, and we might be able to keep the disease from progressing in at least one eye. The patient may have to receive laser treatment sooner or later, but from the study we will be better able to judge when, in the course of diabetic retinopathy, should treatment be started and how beneficial early treatment is.

"The DRS showed that laser was so clearly effective in the relatively advanced stages that the study gave significant answers after 2 years instead of 5-7. The sooner we have answers to these new questions, the sooner we'll be able to help all patients with diabetic retinopathy; many of whom come to us only after one of their eyes is blind."

"FA-LA-LA-LA-LA" – Reverend Charles Kessler's Christmas carolers spread seasons greetings.

Dolls and ornaments and Christmas plants were especially hot items at the Friends of the Deaconess Bazaar.

A Deaconess Christmas 1979

"Here Comes Santa Claus" – Everyone joined in with Mavel Biagini's sing-along at the employee Christmas party.

Sonya Grey loved Miss Piggy.

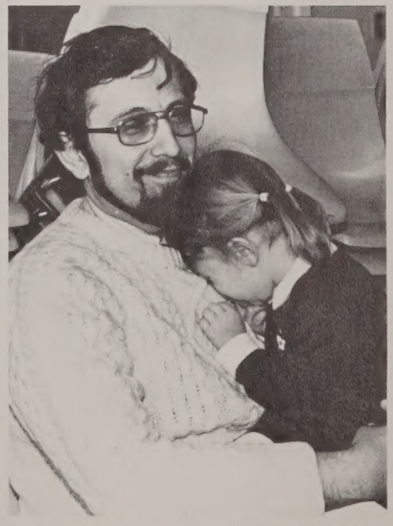
Everyone had plenty to eat at the Christmas party.

Night employees enjoy first "Thanksmas" party.

Happy New Year

Santa proved a big hit for most.

But some weren't quite so sure.



While still others preferred the comfort of their daddy's arms.

Service Awards were given to 59 Deaconess employees honored at a coffee hour on November 27 in Harris Hall. Following remarks by President Laurens MacLure, the pins were presented to employees who have completed 5, 10, 15, 20 or 30 years of service. Recipients not in attendance are listed below:

Five year awards
Mary Beatty
Denise Carrie
Kirstina A. Shorey
Lynn W. Worley
Intensive Care Unit (ICU)
William B. Campbell
Laboratories
Thomas Carson
Building Services
Jean M. Collins
Paula M. Duke
Maureen Farrell
Carnetta Springer
Nursing Service
Deborah Devers
Theresa Abbisso
Inalbis R. Gonzalez
Service Coordination
Richard A. Grieves
Diagnostic Radiology
Eugenia Papageorgakis
Lowry Building
Ada M. Whitcomb and
Joyce Tower
Dietary
Thomas L. Wright
Materials Management
Frances A. Hanners
Observation Unit

Richard E. Lee, NEDH director, joins nursing service employees Helen L. Clarke (l) and Selma F. Berman in celebrating their twenty years at the Deaconess.

Ten year awards
Marilyn R. Boynton and
Willa Jean Menz, *ICU*
Valerie J. Giordano
Mary A. Kenney
Surgical Services
Iris M. Godfrey
Nora A. Ryder
Helen L. Smith
Nursing Service
Alice M. Ellis
Building Services
Patricia S. Kelley
Laboratories
Stephen F. Savilonis
Administrative Services
Robert C. Rainey
Engineering and Maintenance
Patricia L. Nagle
Service Coordination

Fifteen year awards
Janice E. Case
Marja L. Warakois
IV Therapy
Carol Jane Keyes, *ICU*
Margaret C. Dowd
Nursing Service

Gift *(continued from page 2)*

In a combined five hour and 15 minute operation on January 4, Dr. John A. Libertino, director of transplant service at Lahey Clinic, assisted by Dr. Christopher Gregoriades, chief urology resident, successfully grafted a kidney into Labrini's body. Dr. Leonard Zinman and Dr. Robert Eyre earlier that morning removed the kidney from Mrs. Bitsa.

After the operation Dr. Libertino was cautiously optimistic about Labrini's chances for continued acceptance of the kidney saying, "so far everything is going beautifully and the kidney is processing a substantial quantity of urine."

As PULSE goes to press, both Bitsas are doing well with Labrini up and walking. If everything continues this way, 1980 will mark the beginning of a new chapter of hope in Labrini's life.

Five year award recipients. *Front row: (l-r) Margaret O'Connell, social services; Pearline B. James and Irene Borghi, dietary; Barbara Giannetti, diagnostic radiology. Second row: Vivian A. Scheim, laboratories; Gertrude Matthews, dietary; Shelley Kaye Northrup, laboratories; Joanne McCarthy, nursing service. Top row: Stephen Rebello, social services; Paul C. Bast, Jr., coffee shop; Judith B. Etkind, Patricia M. Soule, and Maryann Figoni, laboratories.*

Ten year award recipients. *(l-r) Nancy L. Sweeney, surgical services; Kathleen P. McArdle, G I unit; Mary F. Roche, and Allouma C. Clair, nursing service; Salvador L. Ortiz, dietary.*

Deaconess Director Richard Lee congratulates Sarah E. Tompkins, ambulatory services, on her thirty years of service at the hospital.

Fifteen year award recipients. *(l) John Sheehan, data processing, and David O. Moyer, engineering and maintenance.*

pulse

The New England Deaconess Hospital is a 489-bed and 14-building complex. Physicians from the Joslin Clinic, the Lahey Clinic, Overholt Thoracic Clinic and the general medical and surgical staffs serve the needs of their patients at the hospital. The Deaconess is internationally known for diagnosis, treatment and research in brain and chest surgery, cancer, diabetes and general medicine, and is affiliated with Harvard Medical School.

PULSE is published monthly by the public relations department of the New England Deaconess Hospital.

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NEDH celebrates Christmas 1979

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